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Words of Wisdom from the "Head"

Kathy F. Kuser, Director of BCN



Happy New Year! As we start the new millennium, the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs has implemented a "new" New Year's resolution to create a quarterly newsletter for child nutrition sponsors to share news, program updates and success stories from local school food service directors from around the state. In this age of technological advances, we will start by sending a printed version as well as providing it online for instant access to current regulatory information and its impact on your individual operations.

The Bureau currently has a website in the New Jersey Department of Agriculture under the Division of Markets at

www.state.nj.us/agriculture. Be sure to make this one of your favorite sites.

Our future plans also include on-line access to annual program application documents, bureau memorandums and paperless reporting for the monthly reimbursement voucher payment process. As you can see, we have much work to do to streamline and improve our operations and service to you as *our* customers. The primary goal of this Bureau is to continually improve our services to you.

Each newsletter will have content sections to provide you with regulatory highlights,

dietary guideline information, bureau announcements, websites of interest, and our second area of focus, training announcements for school food service personnel.

Let us hear from you and be sure to watch for a very special announcement pertaining to the return of the famous Food Service Management Institute at Rutgers University.

Remember, "We think food because they can't think without it." Do you offer a school breakfast program? More in our next issue.

Think About Each Grain of Salt



\SMI UPDATE/

Analyzing sodium levels in your menus will be an additional consideration in the 2001 fiscal year's school meals initiative (SMI) reviews. USDA strongly recommends that we work to reduce sodium levels in our school meals, consistent with the Dietary Guidelines 2000. We at the Bureau of Child Nutrition know how difficult that can be so we will start the monitoring

process using levels of 1000 mg for lunch and 1000 mg for breakfast. This level takes us very close to the RDA of 2400 mg/day, but still allows some leeway.

Using fewer processed foods and including more fresh or frozen vegetables, rather than canned, are two of the ways recommended to lower sodium levels.

Since school lunches rely heavily on processed foods, you could begin your sodium check by looking at the labels of the products you are using and comparing them to similar products from another company. You can also request vendors and manufacturers to make an effort to lower sodium levels in their processed products.





*Did you hear about
the old man who ate
a lightbulb?*

*He just wanted a
light snack.*

**Check out the Food
Allergy Network for
more info on dealing
with food allergies:**

www.foodallergy.org

Senior Citizens Go Back to School

\STATE NEWS/

In selected elementary schools in Long Branch and Neptune, Monmouth County, the **Intergenerational School Breakfast Program** has won rave reviews. The pilot program was initiated last spring and its tremendous success will lead to its expansion in the

months ahead. Through the program, senior citizens volunteer to join elementary students who take part in the school breakfast program, helping them with their meals and socializing with the youngsters. Co-sponsored by the New Jersey Departments of Health and Human

Services, Agriculture, and Education, the Monmouth County Office on Aging, the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, and the local town senior centers, the program enlists older New Jerseyans to instill good nutritional habits in our youngest citizens. If the early success of the program is any indication,

Accommodating Special Dietary Needs

\REG HIGHLIGHT/

As a school food service professional, you know that schools must make substitutions in breakfasts, lunches, or after school snacks for students with a disability that restricts their diets. Schools may also make substitutions of recommended alternate foods for students who do not have a disability but who cannot consume the regular

meal because of medical or other special dietary needs.

Substitutions are made on a case-by-case basis and must be supported by a statement of the need for substitutions unless exempted by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. For students with disabilities, the statement of need must

be signed by a physician. For those without disabilities, the statement must be signed by a physician or other recognized medical authority (physician's assistant, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, or other specialist).



Did You Know?

The **tomato** was originally thought to be the forbidden fruit of Eden and they were originally called "love apples"; a cousin of the potato, the tomato is rich in vitamins A and C, as well as potassium and niacin.



Bananas were probably one of the first plants to be cultivated by humans. They are rich in potassium, plus some Vitamin A, niacin, iron, and protein.



Potatoes, when first introduced in Europe, were cursed as an evil food. Potatoes are good sources of vitamins C and B6, niacin, iron, and iodine.



Vegetarian Ranks Growing

If more of your students are requesting vegetarian selections in your school cafeteria, you are part of a growing trend. Different types of vegetarian diets are becoming increasingly popular in all age groups, especially among teens. But is your food service operation ready to meet the demand? Here's what this dietary make-over means to you.

Vegetarians eat mainly fruits and vegetables. Some also eat eggs and dairy products but never meat, poultry or fish. Some types of vegetarians are as follows:

✿ **Vegans** exclude all animal products: no eggs or dairy products and no combination foods that may have any trace of animal products. Some may even avoid honey.

✿ **Lacto-vegetarians** exclude meat, poultry, fish, and eggs but DO eat dairy products.

✿ **Lacto-ovo** vegetarians exclude meat, poultry, and fish but DO eat eggs and dairy products. In school kitchens, you should have alternative sources of protein or meat substitutes for these students, such as eggs,

beans, peas, nuts, seeds, milk, cheese, and yogurt.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service has updated requirements for using alternate protein products (APP) in school meal patterns. The previous 30% limit on the amount of APP that could be utilized has been lifted. APP can now be used to meet all or part of the meat/meat alternate requirement. This change not only helps you plan vegetarian meals, but also helps to reduce the overall fat content of the meals.

NOTE!

Some great quantity vegetarian recipes can be found at the web site of the Vegetarian Resource Group (VGR). Check it out at:

www.vrg.org

The VGR also has a quarterly Foodservice Update that gives tips, recipes, and articles on new vegetarian products available for foodservice and a Q & A hotline.

Write to VGR at P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203 or call 410-366-8343.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000

The 2000 edition of the dietary guidelines focuses on an easy-to-remember formula for good health: **Aim** for fitness; **Build** a healthy base; **Choose** sensibly. The ten guidelines, grouped under these three categories are as follows:

- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day.
- Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.
- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.



Are carrots really good for your eyesight?

Absolutely! Did you ever see a rabbit wearing glasses?





DIVING INTO THE INTERNET

Making Parents Partners in Nutrition

A recent USDA study confirms that the more a mother knows about health and nutrition, the better the overall quality of her child's diet. The message here is that children will choose more nutritious food in our cafeterias if their mothers have nutrition knowledge. This is

good news because the School Meals Initiative directs us to look for ways to serve foods with less total fat and saturated fat, less sodium, and more fiber.

How can you help reach parents? Try publishing nutrition facts on your menus or coordinate with your

school's PTA to distribute nutrition information. Attach a healthy eating guide to the school meal application that goes home to each household. Give parents the URLs of nutrition-related web sites such as:

www.exhibits.pacsci.org/nutrition
www.kidshealth.org/kid
www.nutritionexplorations.org
www.5aday.com



What do computers munch on?

Chips.



Stake Out a Web Page

With more students and their parents surfing the web every day, this is a great time to capitalize on an exciting way to promote your program, advertise your menus, seek help for staffing needs, and disseminate nutrition information. Many school districts

have their own web sites and your program should be a part it. Check with your district technology specialist on how you can own a piece of the district's web site. Check out these samples of local school nutrition programs' web pages:

www.kent.wednet.edu/KS/D/CK/CK_home.html

www.svusd.k12.ca.us/food/default.htm

www.wcpss.net/Auxiliary/Nutrition/

The bureau would like to open up the information superhighway from us to you – we are beginning the process of collecting e-mail addresses for all school food service directors to keep all of you better informed. The

Information Super-Highway

There are lots of nutrition and food service resources available on the internet. To help you start tuning in, here are some sites that offer you important information for your program:

Regulatory information regarding School Nutrition Programs:

www.fns.usda.gov

www.nal.usda.gov/fnic

Nutrition and food service training information:

www.nfsmi.edu

www.fns.usda.gov/tn

General food and nutrition sites:

www.eatright.org

www.asfsa.org

Recipes:

www.mealsforyou.com

www.state.nj.us/agriculture/recipes/



Nutley High Wins Design Award

HELLO! Let me introduce myself. I am a 41 year old chair located in the 41 year old cafeteria dining room in Nutley High School, Nutley, NJ. I have called this home for oh----about 41 years, give or take a few. My fellow friends and neighbors (248 chairs and 50 tables) can attest to the fact we have seen quite a bit of action in the "five plus decades which have passed since we found our home in the Nutley High School dining room, and we have the chips, scratches, peelings, graffiti, and water damage to prove it. Why, we have seen and been part of it all. Some fond memories include the 1959 sock hop, in which many teenagers danced on my seat, instead of sitting on it; the 1969 peace demonstration in which my fellow tables were decorated with peace symbols; the 1979 disco dance, where glitter balls hung from the ceiling; the 1989 environmental speech in which our components were analyzed to see if we were biodegradable; and most recently, the 1999 millennium bash. Even though we have been through a great deal, I can honestly say we have held up as "real troopers". Why just look at photo #1. I believe my "beautiful" smoky salmon seat and back are composed of that highly durable compound called melamine. Anyone who has worked within institutional food service knows that melamine is that substance which abused dishes are made of, not your ordinary dishes, mind you. We are talking about the kind of dishes you can use to climb a mountain, and not even see a chip or hairline scratch. In fact, this stuff is so durable, I overheard the science teacher tell

a fellow teacher that NASA was contemplating coating the next lunar rocket with this finish because of the excellent heat properties melamine exhibits. Well, there I go, talking about only us chairs, when there are other items to describe, for instance our gorgeous tile floor. Please direct your attention to photo # 2. The floor upon which we place our stainless, and might I add scratchless, legs, is composed of the same "lovely" shade of smoky salmon and battleship gray, with cream colored marble to "add some spice". Naturally, this floor has had the pleasure of the same momentous occasions as my fellow chairs and tables. It stands to reason, we were all installed at the same time, and have been one big happy family ever since. Our floor, however, shows visible proof of the speed upon which children move. Observe the wear and tear of the floor in photo #3. This is visible shoe wear and tear and is proof positive that children will stop at nothing to bolt out of their seats after lunch to get to class on time. At one time, the head custodian, Al, tried to fix the tile problem, but he couldn't find the exact shade of "magnificent" smoky salmon, so a semi-smoked version filled the floor marks, at least temporarily, until they resurfaced. Well, what can I say? At least an attempt was made. In fact, this is evident in other areas as well. Why just take a look at my fellow chair at the neighboring table (photo #4). He is made of the same durable melamine finish, but is orange in color. A good try, but not quite hitting the bull's eye. To cut a little slack, this counts as an "A" for effort, for after all it's just a high school cafeteria, and we can't match all

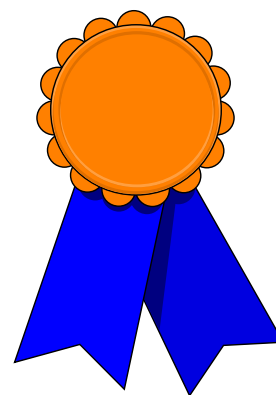
of the time, now can we? The most recent attempt to spruce up our living quarters was that the poles and walls were painted in the true colors of Nutley High, maroon and gray. Not to sound ungrateful, but somehow, the beautiful paint job on the poles and walls don't complement me or my fellow tables and chairs. I guess we are just too old, and the new paint makes us REALLY show our age! Oh! To dream the impossible dream! If only we could get the makeover we deserve, why, my fellow chairs and tables could FINALLY RETIRE! We sure could use the rest. My daily makeover dream consists of new equipment, new serving line directly in the serving area, kiosks strategically placed for quick and easy flow patterns, and naturally, new tables and chairs to accommodate the 1000 plus growing school population. Last, but not least, we could benefit from a beautiful color scheme in the school colors complete with a giant size mural of the famous Nutley High School Raider (a pirate for those of you who are not familiar). We are a proud set of tables and chairs, yes we are, but we are TIRED. So, we have lowered ourselves to begging and pleading for the much needed school cafeteria makeover Nutley High justly deserves. Thank you for reading our heart filled thoughts on this matter. Please help our dream become a reality.

Signed,

The 1959 Smokey Salmon
Melamine Nutley High School
Cafeteria Chair

This essay, along with photos of their current cafeteria set-up, was submitted by Linda Scarpa, food service director for the Nutley Public Schools. This was a national contest sponsored by the Wholly Guacamole! magazine and Linda's entry won the district free architectural design for cafeteria renovation at Nutley High School by Silver Petrucelli & Associates, Inc.

Congratulations to Linda for a well deserved award!!



PROMOTIONS, PROMOTIONS AND MORE PROMOTIONS!!

Eat Smart. Play Hard.



When is music like vegetables?

When you have two beets.



What vegetable is small, red, and whispers?

A Hoarse Radish

“Eat Smart. Play Hard.” is a national nutrition education and promotion campaign designed to give kids science-based, behavior-focused, motivational messages about healthy eating and physical activity. Created by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, the message is carried by **“Power Panther”**, a cool cat cartoon mascot. The USDA is providing posters, a slogan, slicks and other materials to support this campaign

which centers on four basic themes: Breakfast, Snacks, Balance, and Physical Activity. The messages reflect the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid. The **“Eat Smart. Play Hard.”** slogan promotes healthy eating and physical activity in children in an effort to curb the prevalence of diet-related health problems. Statistics show that America’s children eat shockingly low percentages of foods suggested by the Food Guide Pyramid. Moreover,

childhood obesity is reaching epidemic levels. For more information on using this campaign to motivate children towards healthier lifestyles, visit the FNS website at:

www.fns.usda.gov

Five-A-Day for Better Health

Take advantage of March’s designation as National Nutrition Month! It’s a great opportunity to promote the importance of eating five servings of vegetables and fruits each day by highlighting the national 5-A-Day for Better Health campaign. The sponsor of this promotion, Produce for Better Health Foundation, is a great resource for colorful brochures, publications, and giveaways. Check out their website at www.5aday.com or call 888-391-2100 for catalog and ordering information.

Food for Thought

Through an exciting campaign called **“Food for Thought”** the New Jersey Department of Agriculture is aggressively marketing the school breakfast program.

Backing its message with money, NJDA offers an additional 10

cents per breakfast as further incentive for schools to participate.

Solid evidence proves that students perform and behave much better when they eat breakfast.

What better way to insure that they start

the day off right than by providing a nutritious breakfast at every school cafeteria in the state?

Food for Thought indeed!!



Get to Know Us Better

In this first issue of *Jersey's BLT*, we want to introduce all of the Bureau of Child Nutrition's School Nutrition Programs staff. From old timers to "new-timers," all of us are dedicated to keeping you informed about the resources and tools YOU need to help you run your individual programs.

Kathy Kuser is our **Division Director**. Kathy's responsibility extends beyond the school nutrition programs to encompass the New Jersey Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Food Program, the Summer Food Program, and the folks who handle the financial processing for the bureau.

Emma Davis-Kovacs is **Coordinator of School Nutrition Programs**. Emma has recently assumed the lead

for our school nutrition programs after many years heading up the Summer Food Program.

Additional **administrative staff** include **Barbara Guarnieri**, Assistant Coordinator for Public School Authorities; **Joanne Lontz**, Assistant Coordinator for Non-Public School Authorities; and **Janet Renk**, Assistant Coordinator for the School Meals Initiative and Sponsor Training.

Our **field consultants** are headed up by the **Regional Coordinators Janice Vecchione** (North), **Jill Niglio** (Central) and **Cheryl Goffus** (South)

The **Child Nutrition Specialists** field staff are **Carol Flato** and **Arlene Ramos** (North); **Karen Krawczun** (Central) and **Emily**

Lomerson (South).

Rounding out the division are our **office staff**, who perform all the necessary "behind the scenes" functions -- **Lee Hayes, Carla Lewis, Carol Dolci** and **Denise Johnson**.

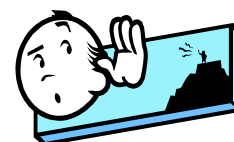


Can We Get A Room From You?

The Bureau of Child Nutrition is always looking for good places to hold workshops and training sessions around the state. Most of the events would be during the school year, with the exception of a few held at the end of August for determining officials. A good site would accommodate up to 50 people, with tables and chairs, and have easily accessible parking. And, of course, there'd be no rental fee!!

We also need additional sites, preferably one in every county, that has satellite reception capabilities so that we can offer national satellite seminars.

If any of you think your school could fill either of these bills, or if you know of other facilities which might, please contact Janet Renk at 609-984-0692 or email Janet.Renk@ag.state.nj.us.



Teacher: "What's the formula for water?"

Student: "H,I,J,K,L,M,N,O."

Teacher: "That's not the formula I taught you."

Student: "Yes, it is. You said it was H to O."



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We're under Division of Markets

www.state.nj.us/agriculture

Jersey's BLT

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Join Jersey's "TEAM Nutrition"

"TEAM Nutrition," USDA's national nutrition education program, is still recruiting schools for the project and offering more training and resources to build the program's success.

A recent TEAM Nutrition kit has been released entitled "***Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment***".

A statewide New Jersey TEAM is being organized to strategize ways to implement this new program and improve the overall nutrition and health environment for students in the Garden State.

National Assoc. of State Boards of Education (NASBE) is also behind this initiative. They have recently published a new policy guide entitled "*Fit,*

Healthy, and Ready to Learn: A School Health Policy Guide", designed to help local districts establish effective policies to help students achieve academically and adopt and maintain lifelong healthy habits. Copies of this guide are available from NASBE by calling 800-220-5183. The cost is \$22 plus \$4 shipping.

About Jersey's BLT...

We hope you've enjoyed our first issue of *Jersey's BLT*. This newsletter will be published quarterly to keep you abreast of current information and resources to assist you in your local food service operations.

Please let us hear from you – we welcome ideas for future articles and we will look forward to highlighting newsworthy happenings in your districts.

Send thoughts or comments to Janet

Renk, NJDA, PO Box 334, Trenton, NJ 08625-0334 or email Janet.Renk@ag.state.nj.us.



Mark Your Calendars

FEBRUARY 1	Deadline for On-Site Meal Accountability Reviews
MARCH	National Nutrition Month – "Food & Fitness: Build a Healthy Lifestyle"
MARCH 5 – 9	National School Breakfast Week – "Launch Your Day With School Breakfast"
MARCH 4 – 7	ASFSA Legislative Conference , Washington, D.C.
APRIL 25	Satellite Seminar – "Work Simplification/Productivity Enhancement"
JULY 31– AUG 1	Summer Food Service Management Institute – Cook College, New Brunswick